

ADEN, 1938

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Dhow Building

Dhows are built at Maala by a number of Hadhrami merchants settled in Aden. They turn out about seven vessels a year, the average carrying capacity of which is about 200 tons. The dhows are constructed of Indian teak from the Malabar coast and are well built and fast. They sail to India (Bombay and the Malabar coast) and to the East African coast as well as to neighbouring Arabian ports, and take a large share in local trade, in spite of the competition of the coasting steamers of Messrs. Cowasjee Dinshaw & Brothers and of Monsieur A. Besse (Halal Shipping Company). Monsieur Besse now maintains a fleet of dhows in addition to his motor vessels. Many of these dhows are equipped with auxiliary engines

Soap Manufacturing

A soap manufacturing industry started by Monsieur Besse in December, 1932, at Maala is progressing satisfactorily. The soap is manufactured by boiling coconut oil and cold processes. Local labour of 40 men is employed, and the output is about 50 cases daily, each case containing 200 cakes, which are disposed of locally or exported to the Red Sea Ports.

Dyeing

There are three factories which do business in dyeing cloth each employs on an average about 60 persons daily. There are in addition about 18 dyers who do business on a small scale. The dyed goods are mainly exported to Mombasa, Mogadiscio, Massowa, Hodeidah, and the interior of Arabia.

Cigarette Making

The cigarette industry is conducted on a fairly large scale by Jews and Greeks with tobacco imported from Egypt.

VII.—COMMERCE**Customs**

Aden being a free port, there are no customs duties.

Trade

The trade of Aden is mainly transshipment as the port is a centre for trade between all ports of the world and the neighbouring territories. The principal business is in skins, hides, coffee, cotton piece goods, grain and pulse, sugar, spices, oils, tobacco, gums, shells and salt. The total value of the seaborne trade in the year under report (12 months January to December, 1938) exclusive of transshipment cargo, was Rs. 12,16,02,203 (imports Rs. 8,02,17,766, and exports Rs. 4,13,84,437), showing a decrease of Rs. 42,91,828 as compared

226 nets for mullet, mackerel and a form of whitebait are also in use.

439 The catch is at times greater than the requirements for local consumption, and the surplus is salted for export. Shark is almost invariably salted for export and during some seasons large quantities are dried. Whitebait are exported.

226 The fishermen are subject to certain rules which forbid trawls and limit the size of nets, and in addition they defer to the judgment of their elected Akils in matters of fishing custom.

[228] Licences to dive for pearls both in the harbour and in the waters of Perim are obligatory, but no licences are required to fish.

Salt.

258 A salt work was first constructed by the Italian firm of Messrs. Gaustalla and Company (now styled The Aden Salt Works) in the year 1885 and it carries on a profitable business in salt production at Shiekh Othman. This was followed by the salt work constructed in 1909 by the Bombay firm of Messrs. Abdullabhoy and Joomabhoy Lalljee and Company. Two more salt works have since been constructed by Messrs. Hajeebhoy Lalljee and Company and the Little Aden Salt Industrial Company in May, 1923, and October, 1927, respectively, and which continue to work successfully. The total quantity of salt exported to India and other places during the last year was 396,592 tons. The monopoly of salt for local consumption is in the hands of Government, who have licensed certain pits to Arabs at Shiekh Othman.

The Salt (Additional Import Duty) Act passed by the Indian Legislature in 1931 and since extended to April, 1938, has benefited the Aden salt industry, which under the protection of the duty supplies about two-thirds of the total salt imports into India.

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expanded and dried fish and fish oils are now exported regularly. The new exports have more than compensated for the decline in the revenues from incense, the supply of which has suffered from excess cutting and tapping of the few forested areas.

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Indirectly, Aden colony has been a beneficiary of the Iranian oil dispute. The former concessionaire in Iran has begun construction of a 100,000 barrel per day petroleum refinery in Aden which is to supply the general area of the Indian Ocean with petroleum products formerly supplied by the now expropriated and shut-down refinery at Abadan. The estimated cost of this project is about \$140 million. At present over 12,000 workers are employed on various construction jobs connected with the refinery, including over 8,000 natives and nearly 1,000 Indian nationals. Some 3,000 local inhabitants and about 200 Europeans will be permanently employed in this largest industrial establishment in southern Arabia.

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To build and operate this refinery an entirely new town, complete with all modern services, has been established at Little Aden, about six miles from the old port city of Aden. Sufficient water for the domestic requirements of the new town was discovered ten miles away; sweet water for industrial purposes must be obtained by distillation of sea water. A hospital, the largest in Arabia, has also been set up. In general, local trade is benefiting tremendously from the activities of the new oil company. A new port for the discharge and loading of oil tankers is also being built.

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Because of the decline in incense production in the Aden territories, Dhofar is now the most important exporter of this commodity. A petroleum concession in this province has been granted to two American oil companies (Cities Service and Richfield) which have hitherto not participated in Middle East oil development. A large airfield for supplies, etc. has been established near Salala, and thorough exploration of the area is to commence within a few months. The outlook for the discovery of oil is reported to be very favorable, since the oil-rich geological strata of the Saudi Arabian or Qatar oil fields may extend into Dhofar.

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* A concession for the area was formerly held by a subsidiary of the Iraq Petroleum Co.